

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated May 4, 2007 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's allowable subject matter in claim 21.

Claims 19-21 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,762,802, issued to Ono (hereafter "Ono") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,844,255, issued to Suzuki (hereafter "Suzuki").

The rejection of claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ono in view of Suzuki is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection without going into the merits of the rejection because Ono is not valid prior art against the claims of the present application. This application is a divisional of prior application Serial No. 09/734,009, filed December 12, 2000. Therefore, the filing date of the present application is December 12, 2000. The filing date of Ono is May 10, 2001 and the publication data of Ono is November 15, 2001. Therefore, Ono does not qualify as prior art under any section of 35 U.S.C. §102. For at least this reason, claims 19 and 20 are allowable over Ono.

In addition, independent claim 19 is allowable over Ono and Suzuki in that the claim 19 recites a combination of features including, for example, "wherein the short-preventing part has a stepped portion that overlaps a stepped end portion of the gate line." None of Ono and Suzuki, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 19 and claim 20, which depends therefrom, are allowable over Ono and Suzuki.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that Ono discloses the short-preventing part (PSV, AS) having a stepped portion that overlaps a stepped end portion of the


gate line. However, the short-preventing part (AS) of Ono does not have a stepped portion that overlaps a stepped end portion of the gate line. See FIG. 14 of Ono. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit Suzuki fails to cure the deficiencies of Ono. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 19 and claim 20, which depends therefrom, are allowable over Ono and Suzuki.

Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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